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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20, the General Assembly, would:

(a) Take note of the report of the Secretary-General 1/ and the recommendations contained therein for the establishment of a United Nations observer mission to verify the referendum scheduled to take place in Eritrea in April 1993;

(b) Decide to authorize the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations Observer Mission, which will have terms of reference as provided for in paragraph 7 of the report, and to appoint, as a matter of urgency, a Special Representative for the referendum in Eritrea who will head the Observer Mission;

(c) Request the Secretary-General to arrange, as soon as possible, for the deployment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Eritrea in order to commence its verification functions;

(d) Call on the Referendum Commission of Eritrea and all concerned parties to extend their fullest cooperation to the United Nations Observer Mission in order to facilitate the accomplishment of its task;

(e) Further request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

B. Relationship of requests to approved programme of work

2. The requests contained in paragraph 1 above are related to subprogramme 4, "Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections", of programme 4, Special political questions, trusteeship and decolonization, which are incorporated in the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination 2/ for adoption by the General Assembly at its current session. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/137, and following the restructuring of the Secretariat, resources have been made available from the regular budget for an Electoral Assistance Unit in the Department of Political Affairs to carry out activities in support of the Secretary-General's functions in the area of holding and verification of elections as a mechanism to promote peacemaking. Related activities are not programmed in the programme budget since their very nature often precludes prior programming.

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

3. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20, the Secretary-General would establish an Observer Mission to be known as the United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Referendum in Eritrea (UNOVER), the terms of reference of which would be as follows:

(a) To verify the impartiality of the referendum authorities and organs, including the Referendum Commission, in all aspects and stages of the referendum process;

(b) To verify that there exists complete freedom of organization, movement, assembly and expression without hindrance or intimidation;

(c) To verify that there is equal access to media facilities and that there is fairness in the allocation of both the timing and length of broadcasts;

(d) To verify that the referendum rolls are properly drawn up and that qualified voters are not denied identification and registration cards or the right to vote;

(e) To report to the referendum authorities on complaints, irregularities and interferences reported or observed and, if necessary, to request the referendum authorities to take action to resolve and rectify such complaints, irregularities or interference;

(f) To observe all activities related to the registration of voters, the organization of the poll, the referendum campaign, the poll itself and the counting, computation and announcement of the results.

4. In implementing the mandate, the Observer Mission would gather factual information about the conduct of the referendum, particularly with respect to the recognition by the electorate that the ultimate judgement on the referendum process will be made by the electorate. UNOVER's role will be to take note of the decision of the electorate as they determine their fate in a referendum, to recognize the independent character of the Referendum Commission and establish a relationship with it on that basis and to make constructive contributions in ensuring the success of the referendum at every stage of the process.

5. Although it had been foreseen at the time of the preparation of the Secretary-General's report 1/ that UNOVER would start during the second week of September 1992, it is now estimated that the three main phases of the referendum process would be carried out as follows:

(a) The registration of voters starting mid-November 1992;

(b) The referendum campaign during the period mid-November 1992 to April 1993;

(c) The taking of the poll in April 1993.

The mission would then be wound up by May 1993.

6. The mission will be headed by a Special Representative at the Assistant Secretary-General level. Its headquarters will be located in Asmara with regional offices at Asmara, Keren and Mendefera, details of which are provided in document A/47/544. Further information is also provided in the annexes to the present statement.

7. The proposed staffing requirements of the mission comprise a core staff of 22 international staff members to cover the substantive and administrative functions of the mission. As can be noted from annex I to the present statement, these staff would be assigned to the mission in varying periods beginning mid-November 1992 to March 1993. It is estimated that, throughout the period of the mission, 10 of the core staff will form mobile observer teams of 2 persons each, who will make periodic visits to areas falling outside the jurisdiction of the regional offices area in order to provide full coverage. Although resources are requested for the 10 staff comprising the mobile observer teams, efforts will be made to have the posts filled by United Nations Volunteers.

8. As can be noted also from annex I, it is estimated that 123 locally recruited staff will be required - consisting of 3 Secretary/Interpreter (for regional offices), 4 Drivers (for mission headquarters and regional offices), 5 Drivers and 5 Interpreters (for observer teams) for approximately 6 months and 106 Drivers/Interpreters for approximately 2 weeks.

9. During the referendum period in April 1993, it is estimated that the mission personnel will be augmented by 100 election monitors to serve with the mission for approximately 5 to 10 days. It is proposed that 20 of the monitors be staff members from the Secretariat, 50 from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies in Eritrea and Ethiopia and neighbouring countries and 30 would be provided by Member States. Costs associated with these additional personnel relate to round-trip travel expenses and subsistence allowance for the duration of their stay with the mission. Provision would also be made for the engagement of a consultant for three weeks to provide expert advice on the counting aspects of the referendum.

10. In respect of other requirements associated with the mission, rental of premises to accommodate the mission's headquarters in Asmara and the three regional offices in Asmara, Keren and Mendefera is considered a requirement as no commitment has been made by the provisional government to provide office accommodation free of charge to the mission. The estimates would also provide for chartering a light aircraft once a month to transport the observer teams to remote areas of the country and for medical evacuations, should the need arise.

11. With regard to communications equipment, the requirements of the mission for the most part will be met by the loan of equipment from other missions or the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa. Purchase of communications equipment will be limited to the purchase of 10 high-frequency (HF) transceivers. Other equipment requirements relate to the purchase of 9 four-wheel-drive vehicles, of which 4 will be utilized by the substantive/administrative staff and 5 by the observer teams, and electronic-data-processing equipment and other miscellaneous equipment such as camping gear, generators and water purification kits.

12. In respect of public information activities, it is estimated that an amount of $42,000 will be required for radio broadcasts on matters relating to the referendum and local printing of posters, flyers and other promotional materials. The provision includes requirements for the travel of a staff member of the Department of Public Information to Eritrea for two weeks to plan the information activities.

D. Modifications required in the programme of work for 1992-1993

13. As referred to in section B above, the activities called for are not programmed in the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Consequently, no modification will be required.

E. Additional requirements for 1992-1993

14. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20, it is estimated that requirements for the mission in 1992-1993, primarily in 1993, would amount to $2,807,000, of which $1,876,000 relates to personnel costs

such as salaries, fees, travel and related allowances, including a contingency provision for death and disability claims for any international observers not covered by the provisions of Appendix D to the United Nations Staff Rules. The balance, $931,000 would provide for operational costs such as rental of premises, rental and acquisition of vehicles, and equipment communications and rental of aircraft. These estimated requirements are summarized below:

	1992	1993	Total
	$	$	$
General temporary assistance (local staff)	11 000	62 000	73 000
Consultants	-	11 000	11 000
Salaries	115 000	503 000	618 000
Common staff costs (including travel to mission and subsistence)	147 000	698 000	845 000
Other official travel of staff	4 000	20 000	24 000
Travel and subsistence (non-United Nations staff)	-	150 000	150 000
Rental and maintenance of premises	15 000	66 000	81 000
Rental and maintenance of equipment	4 000	61 000	65 000
Communications	24 000	128 000	152 000
Compensation provision for death and disability claims	-	155 000	155 000
Public information activities	-	42 000	42 000
Miscellaneous services	6 000	9 000	15 000
Freight and related costs	15 000	15 000	30 000
Miscellaneous supplies	19 000	21 000	40 000
Acquisition of vehicles	-	180 000	180 000
Communications equipment	-	105 000	105 000
Miscellaneous equipment	126 000	75 000	201 000
Rental of aircraft	-	20 000	20 000
Net total	486 000	2 321 000	2 807 000

15. As can be noted from the above summary the estimated requirements of $2,807,000, are lower than the original estimate of $2,988,000 (rounded) contained in the Secretary-General's report, 1/ owing to the net effect of a later starting date for the mission and revisions and corrections of the provisional costings, shown in the Secretary-General's report. Details of the above estimated requirements are shown in annex II to the present statement.

F. Potential for absorption

16. The programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 includes no provision for the activities outlined above, and it is not anticipated that the related estimates of $2,807,000 can be absorbed within the approved appropriations.

17. The financing of these activities will, therefore, require additional resources, either through an additional appropriation under the regular budget or through voluntary contributions. In this connection, the Secretary-General is making an appeal to Member States for voluntary contributions to fund UNOVER through the United Nations Trust Fund for Electoral Observation, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/137 on enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections. If adequate contributions are received, there would be no need to resort to funding through the regular budget.

G. Summary

18. Before the General Assembly acts on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20, it is the intention of the Secretary-General to inform the Assembly whether sufficient voluntary contributions have been received to fund the mission. If that is not the case, it will be necessary to request an additional appropriation of up to $2,807,000 under the programme budget for 1992-1993. In addition, an amount of $220,000 would be required under section 36 (Staff assessment), offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

Notes

1/ A/47/544.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16 (Part II) (A/47/16).

Annex I

PROPOSED STAFFING TABLE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION TO VERIFY THE REFERENDUM IN ERITREA (UNOVER)

Number of Posts	Level of Post	Description	Period of deployment
1. Core Staff			
1	ASG	Head of Mission	mid-Nov 92/end Apr 93
1	P-5	Chief Electoral Officer and Deputy to ASG	mid-Nov 92/end May 93
1	P-5	Chief of Administration	mid-Nov 92/end May 93
1	P-4	Finance/Personnel and Logistics Officer	mid-Nov 92/end May 93
1	P-4	Political Affairs/Legal Officer	Dec 92/end May 93
3	P-3/4	Regional Coordinator	Dec 92/end Apr 93
1	P-3	Assistant Political Affairs Officer	Mar/end Apr 93
10 a/	P-2/3	Political/Electoral Observer	Dec 92/end Apr 93
2	FSO	Field Service Assistant - Radio Operator/Technician	Dec 92/end May 93
1	GSO	Confidential Secretary	mid-Nov 92/end May 93
22	Total core posts		
2. General Temporary Assistance Staff (local level)			
3		Secretary/Interpreter - (regional offices)	approximately 6 months
4		Drivers - (mission headquarters/regions)	approximately 6 months
10		Driver/Interpreter - (10-man observer team)	approximately 6 months
106		Driver/Interpreter - (election monitors)	approximately 2 weeks
123	Total staff under General Temporary Assistance		
3. Election Monitors			
20		Staff to be provided from the Secretariat (New York, Geneva, and Regional Offices)	approximately 5 to maximum 10 days
30		Monitors to be provided by Governments	approximately 5 to maximum 10 days
50		Monitors to be provided from UNDP and other United Nations agencies in the area	approximately 5 to maximum 10 days
100	Total Election Monitors		

a/ Efforts will be made to fill these 10 posts by the United Nations Volunteers.

Annex II

PROPOSED ESTIMATES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION TO VERIFY THE REFERENDUM IN ERITREA (UNOVER)

	1992 $	1993 $
A. PERSONNEL COSTS		
1. United Nations staff members		
Provision is made for salaries, common staff costs and travel in respect of the proposed 22 core posts for the mission and travel and subsistence allowance for 70 election monitors (20 provided from the Secretariat (New York, Geneva and regional offices and 50 from UNDP and other United Nations agencies in the area)) to be deployed for approximately 5 to a maximum of 10 days during the voting period (see Annex I)		
(a) Salaries - international staff	115 000	503 000
(b) Common staff costs	49 000	220 000
(c) Travel and subsistence	102 000	498 000
2. Local staff		
123 local staff to be engaged under general temporary assistance (see Annex I)	11 000	62 000
3. Government-provided election monitors		
Travel and subsistence (for 30 monitors) (see Annex I)	-	150 000
4. Consultant		
Requirement for a consultant to assist the mission with counting aspects of the referendum	-	11 000
5. Compensation provision for death and disability claims		
A contingency provision to meet potential compensation claims arising in respect of any international observer not covered by Appendix D of the Staff Rules	-	155 000
Total A, personnel costs	277 000	1 599 000

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	1992 $	1993 $
B. OPERATIONAL COSTS		
1. Premises		
(a) Rental and maintenance of premises - rental for a suitable headquarters building in Asmara is estimated at $6,000 monthly for about 6 months ($36,000), additional rentals are required for the 3 regional offices at Keren, Mendefera and Asmara. The regional office at Asmara may be co-located with the mission headquarters, rent for each location is estimated at $1,200 per month for six months ($21,600), provision is made for five months at $1,200 per month for storage facilities and secure parking which may be required in Asmara ($6,000)	13 000	51 000
(b) Cost of utilities, maintenance of premises plus minor repairs to plumbing and electrical installations at the rented premises	2 000	15 000
Subtotal B.1 - Premises	15 000	66 000
2. Vehicle Operations		
(a) Acquisition of 9 four-wheel drive vehicles	-	180 000
(b) Rental of vehicles - Provision is made for the rental of two vehicles in 1992 and 53 vehicles for 5 days during the period of the referendum	4 000	36 000
(c) Maintenance of vehicle	-	25 000
Subtotal - B.2 - Vehicle Operations	4 000	241 000
3. Air Support		
Charter of a light aircraft once a month during 1992 for observer teams to visit remote areas of the country and to cover medical evacuations if the need arise	-	20 000
Subtotal - B.3 - Air Support	-	20 000

	1992 $	1993 $
4. Communications equipment and supplies		
(a) Communications equipment - Purchase of 10 high-frequency (HF) transceivers	-	105 000
(b) Communications supplies and services	-	8 000
(c) Commercial communications - user charges for the satellite communications terminal is estimated at $20,000 per month and other commercial communications costs, telephone and telex charges, postage and pouch services at $4,000 monthly	24 000	120 000
Subtotal - B.4 - Communications	24 000	233 000
5. Miscellaneous Equipment		
(a) EDP/word-processing equipment	42 000	-
(b) Office equipment	12 000	-
(c) Generators	6 000	-
(d) Office furniture	22 000	-
(e) Water purification kits	22 000	-
(f) Standard camping gear	12 000	60 000
(g) Other miscellaneous equipment	10 000	15 000
Subtotal - B.5 - Miscellaneous Equipment	126 000	75 000
6. Miscellaneous Supplies and Services		
Stationery and office supplies, medical supplies, maps, etc.	19 000	21 000
Medical services and examinations, bank charges, casual labour, etc.	6 000	9 000
Subtotal - B.6 - Supplies and Services	25 000	30 000
7. Freight and cartage	15 000	15 000

	1992 $	1993 $
8. Public information activities		
Radio broadcast on matters relating to the referendum, local printing of posters, flyers, and other promotional materials and travel of DPI staff to Eritrea	-	42 000
Total B, operational costs	209 000	722 000
Grand Total	486 000	2 321 000